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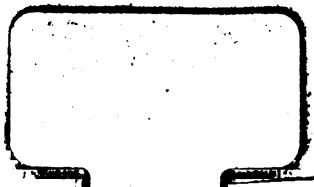

ON THE GAME OF CURLING.

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

GAME OF CURLING,

WITH

SONGS FOR THE CANON-MILLS CURLING CLUB.

"Let ilka true-born Scottish son,
When cranreuch cleeds the snawy grun',
'Mang curling cores seek harmless fun,
And gar his heart's blude tingle."

"Oh! Curling, cauld-defying game!"

Scots Magazine.

Reprinted from the Original Editions.
EDINBURGH.
MDCCCLXXXII.

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PREFACE.

As works relating to Curling or in any way connected with it are scarce, and not readily procurable, two of the scarcest of their kind have been selected for re-publication, with the view of bringing them within reach of the numerous admirers of this agreeable and exhilarating pastime. They will be the more interesting to citizens of "Auld Reekie," from the fact of their being productions from the pens of members of old local clubs, and were probably the earliest works on this subject ever printed. One is entitled "An Account of the Game of Curling," by a Member of the Duddingston Curling Society, dated 1811, and the other is a collection of the "Songs for the Curling Club, held at Canon-Mills," by a Member, dated 1792; both published in Edinburgh. The

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former of these has been largely drawn upon by writers on this subject, and the compiler of "Memorabilia Curliana Mabenensia" frankly admits that the second chapter of his book, containing the historical portion, has been abridged from the intelligent pages of this work. Sir Alexander Boswell, Bart., was a member of the Duddingston Curling Society, and composed and sung several amusing and witty songs at their anniversary dinners, and he is mentioned in the list of writers, whose pens have given interest to the Game of Curling; and than whom there never was "a more facetious companion, a more accomplished scholar, or enthusiastic curler." James Miller, Esq., Advocate, and the Rev. James Muir of Beith, were also members, and composed some excellent songs. Lord Cockburn's name stands in the list, but he does not appear to have recorded his curling experiences in the pleasant "Memorials of his time." The songs of the Canon-Mills Club are humorous and amusing. In addition to their poetical merit, they are interesting as being, so far as known, the earliest collection of Curling Songs ever printed,

and from the proof they afford of the enthusiasm evinced for the game at that period.

The Canon-Mills Loch, on which the members of the Club were wont to assemble, has long since disappeared, having been drained and built over many years ago. In his plan of the City of Edinburgh and its vicinity, published in 1837, Hunter places it in the angle formed by the junction of the roads leading down from Bellevue Crescent and Eyre Place, adjoining the ground occupied by the Gymnasium, but better known in those days as "the Meadow."

A Glossary has been affixed to enlighten those not conversant with the technical terms and phrases in use among curlers, which will render the meanings more intelligible, and point out the beauties and subtleties conveyed in the verses.

J. M.

EDINBURGH *February* 1882.

AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

GAME OF CURLING.

BY A MEMBER

OF THE DUDDINGSTON CURLING SOCIETY.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED AT THE CORRESPONDENT OFFICE.

1811.

TO

THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS

OF

THE DUDDINGSTON CURLING SOCIETY,

THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF THE

GAME OF CURLING

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

The following account is submitted to the Public, chiefly with the view of calling the attention of Cūrlers to one of our national amusements, that some additional information may thus be obtained respecting its origin and early history.

ON THE

GAME OF CURLING.

EVERY thing illustrative of national character is worthy of attention. But here the philosopher and the historian have often to regret the want of sufficient materials. From the earliest ages men have taken care to transmit to posterity the great revolutions which society has undergone: but the particular customs and amusements which prevail among a people, and which have no small influence in rendering them brave and virtuous, or effeminate and vicious, are too often overlooked by literary men, and allowed to sink into oblivion. How many of the amusements which contributed

to brace the hardy limbs of our forefathers, and to generate that noble spirit of freedom which, after a struggle of many ages, reared at last that unrivalled constitution under which we have the happiness to live, are now unknown! Others, though still in existence, are fast hastening to decay. And, ere long, it is probable, even the names of some of them will be found only in the scattered fragments of our national poets. Every attempt, therefore, to preserve the memory of those which still remain, is certainly laudable.

THE Game of CURLING* may justly be regarded as one of our national amusements. It is practised in the winter during the time of frost, and consists in sliding stones along the ice to a particular mark. It has some resemblance to the games of bowls and billiards.

THE stones employed in it are made from blocks of whinstone, or granite, of a close texture, free from cracks, and capable of taking a fine

* *Curl*, from the German *kurzweil*; an amusement, a game; and *curling*, from *kurzweillen*, to play for amusement.

polish. Those whinstone nodules, of concentric texture, called *yolks*, on account of their toughness, and never breaking into large fragments, are reckoned the best. They are found in the beds of rivers, and on the sea-shore; sometimes not far removed from the shape which they are afterwards to assume. They are of a spherical form, flattened above and below, so that their breadth may be nearly equal to twice their thickness. The upper and under surfaces are made parallel to one another, and the angles of both are rounded off. The under surface, or sole, as it is called, is polished as nicely as possible, that the stone may move easily along. Sometimes the sole is hollowed out in the middle, and sometimes it is made a little convex; but that which is perfectly level is unquestionably the best. In many parts of the country there are always a few misshapen blocks employed in the game. These, when well placed by the vigorous arms of those who take the lead, can with difficulty be removed. At Duddingston, however, none are admitted into the game, but such as are of a spherical form, and properly made. When thus prepared,

a handle is inserted into the upper surface, generally of iron, sometimes of wood, and sometimes also of wood, screwed into an iron standard fixed in the stone. They are from 30 to 60 lbs. avoirdupois weight, according to the strength of the person who uses them.

THE *rink** is that portion of the ice which is allotted for conducting the game. The chief thing to be attended to in chusing a rink, is, that the ice be level, smooth, and free from cracks, particularly such as are in a longitudinal or oblique direction. If it be not level, the stones naturally deviate from their proper course, and the game becomes in a great measure a game of chance. The place for the rink being chosen, a mark is made at each end called a *tee*,† *toesee*, or *witter*.‡ It is a small hole made in the ice, round

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* *Rink*, or *renk*, means a course, or race; probably from the ancient Saxon *brink*, *brincg* a strong man.

† *Tee*, probably from the Icelandic *tia*, demonstrare, q. as pointing out the place. Teut. *tijgh-en*, indicare.

‡ *Witter*, to inform, to make known; Su. G. *wittra*, *notum facere*, *indicare*.

which two circles of different diameters are drawn, that the relative distances of the stones from the tee may be calculated at sight, as actual measurement is not permitted till the playing at each end be finished. These circles, in the technical language of the game, are called the *broughs*. A score is then drawn across the rink, at each end, distant from the tee about a sixth part of the length of the rink. This is called the *hog-score*.* It is frequently made waving, to distinguish it from any accidental scratch. The length of the rink, from tee to tee, varies from thirty to fifty yards, according to the intensity of the frost, and the smoothness of the ice. The breadth is about ten or twelve feet. When the ice is covered with snow it must be cleared to that extent, and also ten or twelve feet beyond the tee, at each end, that those stones, which are impelled with too much force, may have room to get far enough not to be of any use.

FORMERLY, that the players might be able to

* *Hog-score*, in some places called *coll*, or *coal-score*, means distance, line; because the stones which do not pass that line are, as it were, distanced, and thrown aside as useless.

stand firm, when they threw the stones, they used to wear *crampits*, which are flat pieces of iron, with four sharp pikes below. They are bound to the sole of the shoe with a strap and buckle. But as the use of crampits is now very much laid aside, a longitudinal hollow is made to support the foot, close by the tee, and at right angles, with a line drawn from the one end of the rink to the other. This is called a *hack*,* or *hatch*. Its situation is such, that, when discharging his stone, the player lifts it up, and makes it pass over the tee.

THERE are generally sixteen stones on a rink, each party having eight. At Duddingston, and in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, each player uses two stones, so that there are eight players on each rink, four against four. But in most other parts of the country, where curling is practised, curlers have only one stone a-piece; in which case there are sixteen on a rink, eight against eight. There may be one or more rinks,

* *Hack*, from the Icelandic *hiacka*, signifies a chop, a crack.

according to the number of curlers. In some great matches, in which different parishes contend with one another, no less than six rinks have been engaged at once. The game may also be conducted by one person against another, by two against two, or three against three, each using one or more stones, as it may be agreed upon.

He who is reckoned the best curler, has generally the power of arranging the order of the game; and whoever is last in order gives directions to all the rest of his party. He is called the *driver*, and the first the *lead*. The origin of which appellations is sufficiently obvious.

It is necessary, too, that each curler be provided with a broom, the use of which will be sufficiently understood by reading the rules of the Duddingston Curling Society, annexed to this essay.

At first, the game is remarkably simple. The lead endeavours to lay his stone as near the tee as possible. If it be a little short of it, upon the middle of the rink, it is reckoned to be fully

better laid than if it touched it. The object of the next in order is nearly the same as that of the lead. When he attempts to strike away the stone of his antagonist, if he miss his aim, his stone will pass by, and be completely useless. But if he place his stone near the tee, without minding that of his antagonist, it has a chance of remaining there, and gaining a shot to his party. The object of the next in order is to *guard** the stone of his partner, if it be near the tee, or to strike off that of his antagonist, if it be nearer. The one who follows, if a stone belonging to his own party be nearest the tee, attempts to guard it; if one of the opposite party, to strike it off, or to *draw a shot*,† if no stone be near the tee.

As the game advances it becomes always more intricate. Sometimes the stone nearest the tee, which is called the *winner*, is so guarded that

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* To *guard* a stone, is to lay another in a direct line before it, so that the one who plays next, on the opposite side, may not be able to get it removed.

† *To draw a shot*, is to make the stone rest as near the tee as possible.

there is no possibility of getting at it directly. It then becomes necessary, in order to get it removed, to strike another stone lying at the side, in an oblique direction. This is called *wicking*,* and is one of the nicest parts of the game. But when the winner cannot be reached, even in this way, the last in order but one or two must then endeavour to remove the opposing stones, by striking them with great force. If each curler use two stones, the driver may clear the ice with his first stone, in order to get at the winner with his last. Sometimes the stones are situated in such a critical manner, that the driver, to avoid the risk of losing any shots which his party may have gained, throws away his stone without attempting any thing.

It is astonishing what dexterity some curlers attain! Whether they have to draw, strike, wick, or *enter a port*,† they will seldom deviate an inch

* *Wick*, from Su. G. *wik*, angulus, a corner, because a corner or part of the stone only is hit.

† To *enter a port*, is to make a stone pass through an opening made by two others lying opposite to one another.

from their aim. This, however, can only be effected when the ice is quite level, an advantage which, in our variable winters, is seldom to be met with. There is almost always some bias, which the curler must attend to, in order to gain his purpose. Much, too, depends upon the person who directs the game. However well individual curlers may acquit themselves, if they want a judicious and experienced director, all their art will not avail.—As the soldiers in an army, whatever may be their individual bravery, if not properly commanded, must yield to superior discipline; so also in a *bonspel*,* the skill of the curlers may be wasted by injudicious directions. When the stones on both sides have been all played, the one nearest the tee counts one; and

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* *Bonspel, bonspiel,* or *bonspeel,* a match at the diversion of curling on the ice, between two opposite parties. This has been derived from Fr. *bon,* and Belg. *spel,* play q. a good game. But it will be found, that the same word is rarely formed from two different languages. It may, therefore, rather be traced to Belg. *bonne,* a village, a district, and *spel,* play; because the inhabitants of different villages or districts contend with each other in this sport, one parish, for example, challenging another.—*Jamieson's Dictionary.*

if the second, third, fourth, &c., belong to the same side, all these count so many shots; thirty-one of which, for each side, is the number usually played for.

THE origin of this game is yet involved in darkness. Whilst most of our national amusements are to be found recorded in the writings of the antiquary and historian, we find no mention made of this before the beginning of the seventeenth century. About that time, the allusions to it are such as clearly prove that it was then pretty generally practised. It is probable, however, that its origin does not go much farther back; because, if it existed in the fifteenth, or about the beginning of the sixteenth century, it could hardly have been omitted in those lists which have been transmitted to us of the ancient amusements of our country. But in none of those lists do we find it ever mentioned, nor does any author make the least allusion to it, previous to that period. In the statutes of the fifteenth century, we find a list of amusements, amongst which are golf and foot-ball, particularly prohibited

by authority, in order to promote the noble art of archery, as it is called. But nowhere do we find a single hint about the game of curling. It can be practised, it is true, only for a short time in winter; but when it is practised, it must, from its very nature, be public, and known to the whole neighbourhood. On which account, had it then existed, it could hardly have been overlooked by those who have particularly enumerated the Scottish amusements of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In later times, when it is known to have flourished in this country, we find it forming a favourite subject for poetic description. Not satisfied with allusions, the votaries of the muses have allotted to it whole poems, and expatiated, with the feelings of a curler, upon the various circumstances connected with this manly Scottish exercise. Now, since we do not find it even mentioned before that period, it is highly probable that it did not then exist, or that it was only in its infancy.

There is another circumstance, which would

lead us to suppose, that the origin of curling, in this country at least, is not very remote. The stones, if we may judge from some specimens that still remain, seem once to have been unpolished blocks, used almost as they were found in the fields, and in the beds of rivers. In place of a handle, they appear to have had only a protuberance at top, with a niche for the finger and thumb. In which form they are still to be seen in several parts of the country. This gave place to the more convenient form of bent wooden and iron handles. The improvement of the handle was connected with improvements in the stones themselves. They gradually laid aside their rude shape, and have now assumed an elegant and uniform appearance. This improvement is still going on, and has been so as far back as our information upon the subject extends. Now, had the game been of very ancient origin, we should expect many of these improvements to have been made long before the time when they actually were made. As society advances in improvement, arts and sciences advance at the same time. No human thing remains stationary. If, then, we

find curling stones, at any period, in the rudest possible form, having received no improvements, we have reason to conclude, that the origin of the game cannot be far distant from that period. And since the earliest notices we have of it do not go farther back than the beginning of the seventeenth century, at which period curling stones were in the rudest form, the game was probably not known in this country sooner than the fifteenth or sixteenth century.

CONNECTED with this is the inquiry respecting the country in which it originated. Upon this subject curlers are divided in their sentiments. Some seem to think that it was an amusement originally Scottish ; others, that it was introduced into this country from the continent.

UPON examining its claims to a Scottish origin, we find those claims resting upon its existence here, and upon the want of sufficient evidence, that it existed, till lately, any where else. That it has now existed in this country more than two centuries, is beyond all doubt. This is a fact,

supported by direct historical evidence. It is also maintained, that had the game been practised on the continent, in Germany, or the Low Countries, about or previous to the time when we have supposed it made its appearance in this country, it would most probably have been more or less practised still; or at least some traces of it would have remained sufficient to demonstrate its former existence. Now, persons who have resided long in those countries, and had the best opportunities of information, have all affirmed, that, at present, no such amusement exists, nor did they perceive any traces of its ever having existed. Such is the argument upon which those who favour the Scottish origin of curling rest their opinion.

WITH regard to the game of curling not being practised, at present, on the continent, this is a point which it is not very easy to ascertain. At this moment, perhaps, the half of the population of England, and a million of the inhabitants of Scotland, never heard of the game of curling. And of all the foreign travellers who have visited this country, and published their travels, not one

has taken the smallest notice of it. The same thing may happen in Germany or the Low Countries. It may be practised in particular districts, and yet travellers, and even persons who have resided long in those parts of the country where it is not practised, may never have heard of such a game.

And even though it do not exist at present on the continent, and though no traces have been observed by many of our countrymen who resided there, of its ever having existed, still this circumstance is far from being sufficient to prove that it is not of continental origin. Within these two hundred years, the occupations, manners, and customs, of the different countries of Europe, have undergone the greatest revolutions. The vast improvements that have been made in agriculture and commerce, by giving employment to persons of all descriptions, have had a fatal influence upon our sports and amusements, particularly such as are practised in the open air. Hence, many of the amusements of former times are now forgotten, or fast going into disuse. The British

youths, engaged from early life in the serious occupations of particular professions, have now little time for active amusements. Shut up in the sickening atmosphere of a public building, and doomed to the irksome task of watching a spindle, or forming a pin, they grow up like stunted trees in the midst of an overcrowded plantation. Curling, therefore, may have once flourished, where now, among an industrious and laborious people, it is completely forgotten.

Our want of written evidence is equally inadequate to prove that curling has not been known on the continent: for the game may have been practised, and yet no accounts of it published, or there may be accounts of it with which we are yet unacquainted. Even in our own country, where we know that it has prevailed for more than two centuries, it is not mentioned by one historian, and is only alluded to in one or two books of antiquities and of law. Now, it is not to be supposed that the Dutch or Flemings, had it prevailed among them two centuries ago, would be more careful to preserve the memory of it

than we in this country have been. The game, therefore, may have existed in the Low Countries, and yet not be noticed in those books of history or antiquities which we have had an opportunity of consulting. Hence, the argument in favour of the Scottish origin of curling, drawn from the want of sufficient evidence that it existed till lately anywhere else, is by no means conclusive.

LET us next inquire, whether the opinion of those who suppose that it was introduced into this country from the continent be well founded. We have, indeed, no direct evidence that it ever existed on the continent, but we have all the evidence which etymology can give in favour of its continental origin. The terms being all Dutch or German, point to the Low Countries as the place in which it most probably originated, or, at least, from whence it was conveyed to us. For if it was not introduced from the continent, but was first invented in this country, it must have been at a time when the German and Low Dutch were the prevailing languages. Now, though the Saxon was once pretty general in this country,

and there are still many Dutch words in our language, yet those German dialects were never so general, as to make it credible, that our countrymen, in any particular invention, would employ them alone as the appropriate terms. In the history of inventions, such a phenomenon is not to be found. Had there been only one or two foreign terms, these would not have militated much against the domestic origin of the game, but the whole of the terms being continental, compel us to ascribe to it a continental origin.

But we have other evidence that curling, or something like it, was originally practised on the continent. Kilian, in his dictionary, renders the Teutonic *kluyten kalluyten*, (*ludere massis sive globis glaciatis, certare discis in equore glaciato.*) Whatever those round masses of ice were, they seem to have been employed in a game on the ice after the manner of quoits. Indeed, it appears highly probable, that the game, which we now call curling, was originally nothing else than the game of quoits practised upon the ice. Some of the very old stones which yet remain

favour this conjecture. They are not only much smaller than those now employed, but instead of a handle, as was mentioned above, have a kind of niche for the finger and thumb, as if they had been intended to be thrown. Besides, the game to which we apply the name of curling, was, till lately, hardly known by that name among the common people. From one end of Scotland to the other, it was always named *kuting*,* to curl, meaning nothing more than to slide upon the ice. In some parts of Ayrshire, we have heard, it is pronounced *coiting*, a circumstance which amounts almost to a proof that it was, at first, merely the game of quoits applied to the ice. Independently of the names, the games themselves have a considerable similarity. The one then might naturally arise out of the other, and assume that form in which it at present exists.

From all which there is a very strong proba-

* Kuting, kuyten, probably from the Teutonic kluyten, kalluyten. If the word, however, be spelt *cootying*, with the Scotch sound of the double *o*, it is derived from the Dutch coete, a quoit.

bility, that the game of curling was introduced into this country by the Flemings, in the fifteenth, or about the beginning of the sixteenth century. It is well known, that in the reigns of Henry V. and VI. of England, and James I. of Scotland, many of them came over to this country, and settled as mechanics and manufacturers in our towns and villages, which had been much depopulated during the destructive wars betwixt the two kingdoms. Then, however, it must have been in a very imperfect state, and probably had a nearer resemblance to the game of quoits.

CURLING is said to have been carried into Ireland by the Scottish colonies who were planted there, so early as the reign of James I. of England. In that country, however, it seems now to be completely unknown. It has made its appearance in some of the northern counties of England; and, within these few years, has even found its way to the capital of the British empire. There, the first essay was made upon the New River; but the crowd of spectators, attracted by such a novel spectacle, becoming very great, the ice

threatened to give way, and the curlers were with reluctance compelled to desist. Whether it has again been attempted, and with what success, we have not been able to learn. It has not been confined within the boundaries of Europe; it has been carried over the Atlantic, and established in the frozen regions of North America. This information was communicated by a gentleman who was himself engaged in curling at Quebec. There, on account of the length and severity of the winter, it bids fair to attain a degree of celebrity unexampled in the milder climate of Scotland. Here, it can be practised only a few days in the season; so few, that for the last twenty years the average number is not more than eight; while, in that country, the amusement may be enjoyed the greater part of the winter.

THE history of curling, in this country, is very little known. The earliest intimation of it, which we have been able to obtain, is in Cambden's Britannia, which was published by himself in 1607. "To the east of the mainland," (Orkney) he says, "lies Copinsha, a little isle, but very

conspicuous to seamen. In which, and in several other places of this country, are to be found in great plenty, excellent stones for the game called curling."* This intimation shews, that the game must have been pretty general, and in considerable repute, when stones were collected from a small island at such a distance from any place where the game could be practised.

BEFORE the middle of the seventeenth century, curling had been generally practised on the Sunday. For Baillie, in his letters,† observes, "Orkney's process came first before us. He was a curler on the Sabbath day." It is hardly necessary to mention, that, before the reformation in this country, Sunday was the day particularly allotted for amusements of all kinds.

IN 1684, we find the game noticed in Fountainhall's Decisions:‡ "A party of the forces having been sent out to apprehend Sir William Scot of

* This extract is taken from Kippis' edition, vol. ii. p. 1473.

† Vol. i. p. 137. ‡ Vol. i. 328.

Harden, younger: one William Scot, in Langhope, getting notice of their coming, went and acquainted Harden with it, as he was playing at the curling with Riddell of Haining, and others."

PENNANT, in his Tour in Scotland,* in 1792, thus describes the game. "Of all the sports of these parts, that of curling is a favourite, and one unknown in England. It is an amusement of the winter, and played on the ice, by sliding from one mark to another great stones of 40 to 70 lbs. weight, of an hemispherical form, with an iron or wooden handle at top. The object of the player is to lay his stone as near the mark as possible, to guard that of his partner which had been well laid before, or to strike off that of his antagonist."

CURLING has never been universal in this country. But in some places where it once was, it is now no more; while in others it is flourishing as much as it ever did, at any former period. And, in many parishes, the number of players is

* P. 93.

double of what it was half a century ago. When our nobility resided upon their estates in the country, it was one of their favourite amusements. A challenge was sent from one baron to another, to engage in a bonspel with their respective tenants. The gentry in the country still partake of this interesting amusement. Matches are made up in a great variety of ways. One parish challenges another to contend with them upon some pond, or lake, or river, in the neighbourhood. And when the same parishes contend more than once, the conquerors in the last contest have generally the privilege of choosing the place where they are to play next. Sometimes one part of a parish challenges another, or the married men those who are unmarried. Some districts too, have long been distinguished for their dexterity in the art, and at present, perhaps, none more so than the upper and middle wards of Lanarkshire, and certain parts of Dumfriesshire.

At Edinburgh, where curlers are collected from all the counties of Scotland, this amusement

has been long enjoyed. And in so great repute was it towards the beginning of the last century, that the magistrates are said to have gone to it and returned in a body, with a band of music before them, playing tunes adapted to the occasion. Then it was practised chiefly on the North Loch, before it was drained, and at Canonmills. At which latter place a society was formed about fifty years ago, and continued to flourish a considerable time. Of late, however, it has dwindled away to nothing. Nearly about the same time, another society was formed at Duddingston; but this too was ready to die away, when it was reinstituted in 1795, under the title of the *Duddingston Curling Society.* Silver medals were struck off, to be worn as a badge of distinction by the members. The medals represent, on the one side, a party of curlers at play, and the church of Duddingston and Arthur's Seat on the back ground, with this motto:

Sic Scoti, alii non æque felices.

The other side has the following inscription:

Duddingston Curling Society, instituted 17th January 1795.

SINCE that time, the society has been rapidly increasing in respectability and numbers; new spirit has been infused into the game; and it seems to be fast rising to a degree of celebrity unexampled in the history of curling.

A GOLD medal, to be played for annually, was instituted by the society in 1809. This circumstance, by exciting a spirit of emulation among the members, must contribute not a little to promote their accuracy and dexterity in the art of curling. And as minutes of the proceedings of the society at Duddingston have now begun to be regularly kept, it will be easy, at any future period, to give an accurate history of these proceedings. Measures also will probably be taken to establish a correspondence betwixt the Duddingston Society, and the different parts of Scotland where the game is practised. By which means an extensive and complete body of information may be collected, and produced when occasion requires.

THERE are few amusements which excite more

interest than the game of curling. In the severest weather, a good curler, while engaged in his favourite amusement, feels no cold. In playing himself, and assisting his partners with his broom, he finds sufficient exercise to keep him warm. It must, therefore, be highly conducive to health; and being performed at a time when the labours of the field are at a stand, and when several mechanical employments cannot be carried on, it gives little interruption to business. It brings men together in social intercourse; it enlarges and strengthens the ties of friendship, and enlivens the dreary hours of winter with festivity aad happiness. Games in which scenes of cruelty are exhibited, and amusements which go to enervate and debauch the soul, may well be allowed to sink into oblivion; but those which tend to strengthen the body and cheer the mind, without possessing any corrupting influence, ought surely to be encouraged and promoted. In the present state of society, care should be taken to counteract, by every possible method, that effeminate habit of thinking, and of acting, which the progress of luxury has a constant tendency to produce, and to

call forth those exertions of the body and of the mind, which, when combined, constitute the perfection of the human character. That the game of curling is conducive to this object, is abundantly obvious to all who are acquainted with it. While the Scottish youths, then, shall continue to practise this manly exercise, they should know, for their encouragement, that they are engaged in one of the most innocent and healthy amusements which their fathers have transmitted to them.

THIS game has been noticed by some, and minutely described by others of our national poets. Thus Pennycuick, who flourished in the seventeenth century, and whose poems were published in 1715,

> To curl on the ice doth greatly please,
> Being a manly Scottish exercise.
> It clears the brains, stirs up the native heat,
> And gives a gallant appetite for meat.

Allan Ramsay, who flourished about the begin-

ning of the last century, alludes to it in the following words:

——————— the curling stane
Slides murmuring o'er the icy plain.

So also Burns,

He was the king o' a' the core,
To guard, or draw, or wick a bore,
Or up the rink like Jehu roar,
In time o' need.

GRÆME, a Scottish poet, who died at Lanark in 1785, describes the game with considerable minuteness and precision.

THE goals are marked out, the centre each
Of a large random circle; distance scores
Are drawn between, the dread of weakly arms.
Firm on his cramp-bits stands the steady youth,
Who leads the game. Low o'er the weighty stone
He bends incumbent, and with nicest eye
Surveys the farther goal, and in his mind
Measures the distance, careful to bestow
Just force enough; then balanced in his hand
He flings it on direct; it glides along
Hoarse murmuring, while playing hard before,
Full many a besom sweeps away the snow,
Or icicle, that might obstruct its course.

But cease my muse! what numbers can describe
The various game. Say, can'st thou paint the blush
Impurpled deep, that veils the stripling's cheek,
When wand'ring wide the stone neglects the rank,
And stops midway. His opponent is glad,
Yet fears a similar fate, while every mouth
Cries off the hog.—And Tinto joins the cry.
Or could'st thou follow the experienc'd player
Through all the mysteries of his art; or teach
The undisciplined how to wick, to guard,
Or ride full out the stone that blocks the pass.

Davidson, a poet of considerable genius, who wrote in the dialect of Kirkcudbrightshire, in his poem on Winter, thus describes the game:

But manliest of all! the vig'rous youth
In bold contention met, the channelstane,
The bracing engine of a Scottish arm,
To shoot wi' might and skill. Now to the lake
At rising sun, with hopes of conquest flushed,
The armed heroes meet. Frae dale to doon
The salutation echoes—and amain,
The baubee tossed, wha shall wi' ither fight,
The cap'ring combatants the war commence,
Hence loud throughout the vale, the noise is heard
Of thumping rocks, and loud bravadoes' roar.

The author next gives an account of a bonspel,

betwixt two rival chiefs, on Loch Ken, with considerable humour:

God prosper long the hearty friends
Of honest pleasures all;
A mighty curling match once did
At C***** W**k befal.

To hurl the channelstane wi' skill,
Lanfloddan took his way;
The child that's yet unborn will sing
The curling of that day.

The champion of Ullisdale
A broad rash aith did make,
His pleasure, near the Cam'ron isle,
Ae winter's day to take.

Bold Ben o' Tudor sent him word
He'd match him at the sport;
The chief o' Ken, on hearing this,
Did to the ice resort.

Wi' channelstanes, baith glib an' strong,
His army did advance;
Their crampets o' the trusty steel,
Like bucklers broad did glance.

A band wi' besoms high uprear'd,
Weel made o' broom the best,
Before them like a moving wood,
Unto the combat prest.

The gallant gamesters briskly mov'd,
To meet the daring fae—
On Monday they had reach'd the loch,
By breaking of the day.

The chieftains muster'd on the ice,
Right eager to begin;
Their channelstanes, by special care,
Were a' baith stout an' keen.

Their rocks they hurled up the rink,
Ilk to bring in his hand;
An' hill, an' valley, dale an' doon,
Rang wi' the ardent band.

Glenbuck upo' the cockee stood,
His merry men drew near;
Quoth he, Bentudor promised
This morn to meet me here:

But if I thought he would not come,
We'd join in social play.
With that the leader of the ice
Unto Glenbuck did say:

Lo! yonder does Bentudor come,
His men wi' crampets bright;
Twelve channelstanes, baith hard an' smooth,
Come rolling in our sight:

All chosen rocks of Mulloch heugh,
Fast by the tow'ring Screel.
Then tye your crampets, Glenbuck cries,
Prepare ye for the speal.

And now with me, choice men of Ken,
Your curling skill display;
For never was there curler yet,
Of village or of brae,

That e'er wi' channelstane did come,
But if he would submit
To hand to nieve I'd pledge this crag,
I should his winner hit.

Bentudor, like a warrior bold,
Came foremost o' them a';
A besom on his shouther slung,
On's han's twa mittens bra.

An' with him forth came Tullochfern,
An' Tom o' Broomyshaw;
Stout Robert o'Heston, Ratcliff, and
Young John o' Fotheringhaw.

An wi' the laird o' Cairnyhowes,
A curler guid an' true;
Good Ralph o' Titherbore, an' Slacks,
Their marrows there are few.

Of Fernybank needs must I speak,
As ane of aged skill;
Simon of Shots, the nephew bold
Of Cairny on the hill.

With brave Glenbuck came curlers twelve,
All dext'rous men of Dee;
Robin o' Mains, Clim o' the Cleugh,
An' famed Montgomery.

Gamewell, the brisk, of Napplehowes,
A valiant blade is he;
Harry o' Thorn, Gib o' the Glen,
The stoutest o' the three.

An' the young heir of Birnyholm,
Park, Craigs, Lamb o' the lin;
Allan of Airds, a sweeper good,
An' Charley o' Lochfin.

Bentudor, a Riscarrel crag,
Twice up the ice hurled he,
Good sixty cloth yards and a span,
Saying, so long let it be.

It pleased them a'—Ilk then wi' speed,
Unto his weapon flew:
First Allan o' Airds his whinstane rock,
Straight up the white ice drew.

A good beginning, cries Glenbuck;
Slacks fidging at the sight,
Wi's braw blue-cap, lent Airds a smack,
Then roared out, good-night.

Next Robin o' Mains, a leader good,
Close to the witter drew;
Ratcliff went by, an' 'cause he miss'd,
Pronounced the ice untrue.

Gib o' the Glen, a noble herd,
Behind the winner laid;
Then Fotheringhaw, a fidelin shot,
Close to the circle play'd.

Montgomery, nettlet' and fain,
A reckless stroke did draw;
But miss'd his aim, an' 'gainst the herd,
Dang frae his cunt a flaw.

Wi' cunt step'd forward Tullochfern,
An' saying, to hit, he'd try)
A jeer arose at the cock,
Which shav'd the winner by.

Clim o' the Cleugh, on seeing that,
Step'd forth, an' frae his knee
A stone shot drew, wi' muckle care,
Which settled on the tee.

Ruppin, vexed at the fruitless play,
The cockie hotted fast;
His stane being glib, to the loch ca',
Clost by the winter past.

Stout Robert o' Heaton wi' his broom,
Came stepping up wi' might;
Quoth he, my abbey-burn-fit
Shall win the speal this night.

With that brisk Gamewell, up the rink,
His well mill'd rock did hurl,
Which rubbing Ratcliff on the cheek,
Around the cock did twirl.

Now step'd a crooned gamester forth,
Fleetybank was his name,
Wha said he wad not have it told,
At C****** W**k for shame;

That e'er the chief o' Ken should bear
The palm of victory.
Then heezing his Kilmarnock hood,
Unto the cock drew he.

The stanes wi' muckle martial din,
Rebounding frae ilk shore;
Now thick, thick, thick, each other chas'd,
An' up the rink did roar.

They closed fast on ev'ry side,
A port could scarce be found;
An' many a broken channelstane
Lay scattered up an' down.

Shew me the winner, cries Glenbuck,
An' a' behind stan' aff;
Then rattled up the rocking crag,
An' ran the port wi' life.

Bentudor flung his bonnet by,
An' took his stane wi' speed;
Quoth he, my lads, the day is ours,
Their chance is past remead.

Syne, hurlin through the crags o' Ken,
Wi' inrings nice an' fair,
He struck the winner frae the cock,
A lang claith yard an' mair.

The speal did last frae nine forenoon,
Till setting o' the sun;
For when the hern scraich'd to her tree,
The combat scarce was done.

Thus did Bentudor an' Glenbuck
Their curling contest end;
They met baith merry i' the morn,
At night they parted friends.

GRAHAME, a late poet, well known as the author of the Sabbath, a poem in his British Georgics, has the following animated description:

Now rival parishes, and shrievedoms, keep,
On upland lochs, the long expected tryst
To play their yearly bonspiel. Aged men,
Smit with the eagerness of youth, are there,
While love of conquest lights their beamless eyes,
New nerves their arms, and makes them young once more.

The sides when ranged, the distance meted out,
And duly traced the tees, some younger hand
Begins, with throbbing heart, and far o'ershoots,
Or sideward leaves, the mark. In vain he bends
His waist, and winds his hand, as if it still
Retained the power to guide the devious stone;
Which, onward hurling, makes the circling groupe
Quick start aside, to shun its reckless force.
But more and still more skilful arms succeed,
And near and nearer still around the tee,
This side, now that approaches, till at last,
Two seeming equidistant, straws or twigs
Decide as umpires 'tween contending coits.

Keen, keener still, as life itself were staked,
Kindles the friendly strife; one points the line
To him who, poising, aims and aims again;
Another runs and sweeps where nothing lies.
Success, alternately from side to side,
Changes, and quick the hours un-noted fly,
Till light begins to fail, and deep below,
The player, as he stoops to lift his coit,
Sees half incredulous, the rising moon.
But now the final, the decisive spell,
Begins; near and more near the sounding stones
Come winding in, some bearing straight along,
Crowd justling all around the mark, while one
Just slightly touching, victory depends
Upon the final aim: long swings the stone,
Then with full force, careering furious on,
Rattling it strikes aside both friend and foe,
Maintains its course, and takes the victor's place.
The social meal succeeds, and social glass;
In words the fight renewed is fought again,
While festive mirth forgets the winged hours.

A SONG,

BY DR JAMES MUIR OF BEITH,

COMPOSED AND SUNG BY ONE OF THE MEMBERS OF THE DUDDINGSTON CURLING SOCIETY, AT THEIR ANNIVERSARY DINNER.

CAULD, CAULD, FROSTY WEATHER.

Tune,—"Cauld Kail in Aberdeen."

WHAN chittering birds, on flichtring wing,
About the barn doors mingle,
And biting frost, and cranreuch cauld,
Drive coofs around the ingle;
Then to the loch the curlers hie,
Their hearts as light's a feather,
And mark the tee wi' mirth and glee,
In cauld, cauld, frosty weather.

Our buirdly leaders down *white ice*
Their whinstanes doure send snooving,
And birks and brooms ply hard before,
Whan o'er the hog-score moving;
Till cheek by jowl within the brugh,
They're laid 'side ane anither;
Then round the tee we flock wi' glee,
In cauld, &c.

Wi' canny hand the neist play down
Their stanes o' glibber metal;
Yet bunkers aften send aglee,
Although they weel did ettle.
"Now strike—no—draw—come fill the port,"
They roar, and cry, and blether;
As round the tee we flock wi' glee,
In cauld, &c.

A stalwart chiel, to redd the ice,
Drives roaring down like thunder;
Wi' awfu' crash the double guards
At ance are burst asunder;
Rip-raping on frae random wicks
The winner gets a yether;
Then round the tee we flock wi' glee,
In cauld, &c.

Our chief, whase skill and steady arm
Gain mony a bonspeel dinner,
Cries, "open wide—stand off behind,
"Fy John, fy show the winner;
"He goes—he moves—he rides him out
"The length of ony tether,"
Huzzas wi' glee rise round the tee,
In cauld, &c.

But now the moon glints thro' the mist,
The wind blaws snell and freezing,
When straight we bicker aff in haste
To whare the ingle's bleezing;

In Curler Ha', sae bein and snug,
About the board we gather,
Wi' mirth and glee, sirloin the tee,
In cauld, &c.

In canty cracks, and sangs, and jokes,
The night drives on wi' daffin,
And mony a kittle shot is ta'en,
While we're the toddy quaffing.
Wi' heavy heart we're laith to part,
But promise to forgather
Around the tee, neist morn wi' glee,
If cauld, &c.

RULES IN CURLING,

TO BE OBSERVED BY THE

DUDDINGSTON CURLING SOCIETY.

I.

THE usual length of a rink is from thirty-six to forty-four yards, inclusive; but this will be regulated by circumstances, and the agreement of parties. When a game is begun, the rink is not to be changed or altered, unless by the consent of a majority of players: nor is it to be shortened, unless it clearly appears that the majority are unable to make up.

II.

THE hog-score to be one-sixth part of the length of the rink distant from the tee; and every stone to be deemed a hog, the sole of which does not clear the score.

III.

EACH player to foot in such a manner, that in delivering his stone, he brings it over the tee.

IV.

THE order of playing adopted at the beginning, must be observed during the whole course of a game.

V.

ALL curling stones to be of a circular shape. No stone to be changed throughout a game, unless it happens to be broken; and the largest fragment of such stone to count, without any necessity of playing with it more. If a stone rolls or is upset, it must be placed upon its sole where it stops. Should the handle quit a stone in the delivery, the player must keep hold of it, otherwise he will not be entitled to re-play the shot.

VI.

A PLAYER may sweep his own stone the whole length of the rink; his party not to sweep until it has passed the hog-score at the farther end; and his adversaries not to sweep until it has passed the tee. The sweeping to be always to a side.

VII.

NONE of the players, upon any occasion, to cross or go upon the middle of the rink.

VIII.

IF, in sweeping or otherwise, a running stone is marred by any of the party to which it belongs, it must be put off the ice; if by any of the adverse party, it must be placed agreeably

to the direction which was given to the player; and if it is marred by any other means, the player may take his shot again. Should a stone at rest be accidentally displaced, it must be put as nearly as possible in its former situation.

IX.

Every player to be ready when his turn comes, and to take no more than a reasonable time to play his shot. Should he, by mistake, play with a wrong stone, it must be replaced where it stops, by the one with which he ought to have played.

X.

A doubtful shot is to be measured by some neutral person, whose determination shall be final.

XI.

Before beginning to play, each party must name one of their number, for directing the game. The players of his party may give their advice to the one so named, but they cannot controul his direction; nor are they to address themselves to the person who is about to play. Each director, when it is his turn to play, to name one of his party to take the charge for him. Every player to follow the direction given to him.

XII.

Should any question arise, the determination of which may not be provided for by the words and spirit of the rules now

established, each party to choose one of their number, in order to determine it. If the two so chosen differ in opinion, they are to name an umpire, whose decision shall be final.

THE above rules received the approbation and sanction of a general meeting of the society, held in the Curlers' Hall, Duddingston, upon the 6th January 1804.

SONGS

FOR THE

CURLING CLUB,

HELD AT

CANON-MILLS.

BY A MEMBER.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED BY J. ROBERTSON, NO. 39 SOUTH BRIDGE-STREET.

1792.

SONGS.

THE CURLERS MARCH.

Tune,—"Princess Royal."

I.

THO' Sol now looks shyly, and Flora is gone
To Mother Root's lodgings, of turf, mud, and stone,
Where they two together,
Throughout the hard weather,
Unsocial as Vestals, keep house quite unknown.
Unlike are the Curlers, now more social grown,
Unlike to recluses who winter alone,
With mutual friendship glowing, to action prone,

Forth come they
Brisk and gay,
All in flocks like sons of the spray,
Inspired by the sound of the curling stone!

II.

Tho' hedges around us, and trees every where,
Their hoary heads shaking o'er their arms quite bare,
Are all in a quiver,
As cold made them shiver,
We Curlers are sportive, and youthful our air.
Since Pan has afforded abundance of clothes,
And Ceres vouchsafes acquavitæ and brose,
Who cannot very well with the help of those,
On ice stay
All the day,
Cold and care both driving away,
The name of a Curler unwarily chose.

III.

Tho' quitting, and shaking her cold northern nest
Of feather'd snows, where she long lay at rest;

Her pinions awaiting,
Mischief meditating,
With hostile intent comes the full fledg'd tempest.
To Curlers determin'd their posts to maintain,
And bravely resolv'd thro' a winter campaign
With hard fifty pounders to answer again,
And to treat
Ev'ry threat
With smart repulse and contempt meet,
Such impotent bluster seems perfectly vain.

IV.

Then sally out boldly, and form round our ring,
Like waters in frost we together will cling,
To combat proud Boreas,
Or who else may shore us,
Until we shall meet the return of the spring.
Now mark the dread sound as our columns move on,
So solemn, so awful, so martial's the tone,
The clouds resound afar, whilst the waters groan:
Stable rock
Feels our shock
As if stern Mars in transport spoke;
Such the thunder and crash of the curling stone!

V.

Our exercise o'er, to head-quarters away,
Where old sullen Night seems young, cheerful, and gay;
Full handed approaching,
Her rival reproaching,
Cries, eat, drink, laugh dead, my young brother scrub Day.
The squint ey'd churl now no longer is seen,
Obey the command of the sable clad queen,
Profusion's preceded by beef and green,
And the bowl,
Highland soul!
Does all our cares and fears controul;
Whilst gleefully we drink—"*To all Curlers keen.*"

THE BLAST.

I.

NOW Phœbus south has wander'd,
Come Curlers rear our standard,
Rear, Curlers, our broom standard,
Call North's ilk hardy son;

Tho' fools are in dread,
As if Nature was dead,
We being better taught,
Set their terrors at naught,
And smile when we hear
Them expressing their fear,
As we mark our gog,
And measure off our hog,
To sport on her cold grave stone.
Chorus. Aghast! and struck with wonder,
Bold Boreas hears our thunder,
Invade his domain,
To dispute his reign,
And burst the bands
Of his hard hands,
Which half a world enchain!

II.

Broad sable shoulders rearing,
Like Teneriff appearing
His huge white head, he sneering
Breathes hush, hush, hush, avast!
Waves and rattles hard,
His long icicle beard,

And loose letting fly,
Over Buchan and Sky,
His mantle fur-lin'd,
Of all colours combin'd,
Makes poor Calidons
High tow'ring Grampions,
Seem buttons upon his vest.
Aghast! &c.

III.

The plow's froze in the furrow,
On barn roof lies the harrow,
The trowel, spade, and barrow
Useless aside are cast.
Save Curlers there's few
Who their faces dare shew,
While 'midst frost and snow,
We are all in a glow,
With our nimble brooms,
And our ponderous stones,
Which smartly we ply
Hard weather to defy,
And thus we repel the blast.
Aghast! &c.

IV.

Then Scotia fear no evil,
From Boreas tho' uncivil,
Since countries few can rival
Thy situation blest!
Thy wants are but few,
Tho' not rich by the plough,
Thy frost's moderate,
Tho' thy heat's never great;
Thy short winter day
Is sufficient for play,
Tho' now the night's long,
With a bottle and song,
To cheat it we'll do our best.
Aghast! &c.

V.

Then merry may we a' be,
Mae winters may we a' see,
And a' our cares but sma' be,
Nor mind the ills that's past!
Thrice over we'll play
All the sports of the day.

O'er flesh, fish, and fowl,
And a whiskified bowl,
And wish Boreas may
Keep his breath away till next day,
When we'll meet again
On the congealed plane,
Regardless of his rude blast.
Aghast! &c.

THE ORIGIN OF EDINBURGH CASTLE.

Tune,—"*Auld Lang Syne.*"

I.

ON Calton-Hill and Aurthur-Seat,
Great Boreas plac'd his feet,
And hurled like a curling-stane
The Castle wast the street,
But that was lang syne, dear sir,
That was lang syne,
Whan curling was in infancy,
An' stanes war no fine.

II.

An' lest it should be mov'd or stole,
(Tho' strange it seems to tell)
The handle loos'd, and left the hole
Which now serves for a well.
But that was lang syne, dear sir,
That was lang syne,
Whan curling was in infancy,
An' handles no fine.

III.

Next, as a hint he meant a fort,
Which Northerns might defend,
He like a flag-staff praped up,
His besom shaft on end.
But that was lang syne, dear sir,
That was lang syne,
Whan curling was in infancy,
And besoms no fine.

IV.

Wha thinks it's fase that we alledge,
May carefu' search the hole,
If he finds not the handle-wedge,
He then may doubt the whole.

For 'twas there lang syne, dear sir,
'Twas there lang syne;
An' what needs fo'k dispute about
What happen'd lang syne.

THE THREE OPEN WINTERS.

Tune,—"Jony's Grey Breeks."

I.

I'VE mony winter seen an' spring,
But like o' this did I ne'er see,
Three open winters in a string,
An' may the like again ne'er be.
Chorus. Alake my walie curling-stanes,
Ha'e no' been budg'd thir winters three,
'Tween the rains plish plash an' a fire-side's fash,
They have dreary winters been to me.

II.

Condemned to keep the chimney nook,
The bairns like druiket hens by me,
Fain I'd try Burns' or Ramsay's book,
But then I ne'er a stime can see.
Alake, &c.

III.

Is our great patron, Boreas, dead?
While black skies greet, we penance drie,
Some plashing sour slut in his stead
Wad murder socialitie.
Alake, &c.

IV.

The farmer mourns his rotten sheep,
The mason's wife aft dights her eye,
While poor fo'k cry there's naething cheap,
Some other thing still vexes me.
Alake, &c.

V.

When I on former winters think,
How on the ice we met wi' glee,
And cheerfu' swat to clear a rink,
It gars me sigh right heavylie.
Alake, &c.

VI.

When we had mark'd our gog an' hog,
And parties form'd o' four or three,

Ilk ane wi' crampits an' broom scrog,
How anxious, yet how blythe play'd we?
Alake, &c.

VII.

When we had keenly play'd a while,
Brose comes, an' whisky, cawld to flee,
We Sol and Boreas to beguile,
'Tween shots wi' spoon or glass make free.
Alake, &c.

VIII.

When anes our game or light was done,
We marched to dinner merrylie,
Wi' saul an' body baith in tune,
Wha shu'd be blythest, a' our plea.
Alake, &c.

IX.

When comes the bowl we drink an' sing,
An' crack o' bonspales, till ha'f ree,
Syne part in peace, a happy thing,
Sic times again I fain wad see.
Alake, &c.

X.

May Boreas hasten frae the north,
Gi' silver lokes to bush an' tree,
I'd rather he wad plank the Forth,
Then Thetis ever on us be.
Alake, &c.

THE WELCOME HAME.

Tune,—"*The Mariner's Wife.*"

I.

THE Loch is bearing! do ye hear,
Deam set your wheel awa,
Get a' your kitchen glancing clear,
The floor as white's the snaw.
Chorus. There's nae luck about the house,
There's nae luck at a',
What luck can winter days produce,
Whan Curlers are awa.

II.

In simmer time whan fo'k wa'k out,
Some friends may on us ca',

But whan the sun gaes south about,
Auld Reekie keeps them a'.
There's nae luck, &c.

III.

Gae ram the chimley fu' in haste,
Get on the muckle pat,
I'll to the bot an' wail a breast
To make them brose fu' fat.
There's nae luck, &c.

IV.

Gae ladie seek their crampits out,
For they will a' be here,
To get a dram, without a doubt,
Afore the ice be clear.
There's nae luck, &c.

V.

Ye'll be a tawpy a' your life,
The ribs ripe to baith en's,
I trow I was a lucky wife
That kill'd yon pair o' hens.
There's nae luck, &c.

VI.

The chuckies are no auld nor teugh,
I'll draw them just e'now,
I dare say we'll hae meat eneugh
Shu'd our big room be fu'.
There's nae luck, &c.

VII.

There's just as good a mutton leg
As on a cleek can hing,
But I've forgotten, haste ye, Meg,
A' lay asteep the ling.
There's nae luck, &c.

VIII.

They's the substantials, for the rest
I'll try an' make a shift,
Get yellow neeps an' greens in haste,
As mony's ye can lift.
There's nae luck, &c.

IX.

Gae up an' dust the muckle room,
An' set the tables right;

I trow it has o'er lang been toom,
I hope it's fu' the night.
There's nae luck, &c.

X.

Rin up for lemons, down your feet,
An' stay na' by the gate;
They say long fasting hanes nae meat,
They'll some o' them sit late.
There's nae luck, &c.

XI.

Bring me the sugar lafe to brake,
See knives an' forks be clean,
I'd rather ye wad brake your neck,
Than ought were dirty seen.
There's nae luck, &c.

XII.

Hech, now I think the warst o'ts o'er,
Sae they may come their wa',
May this frost stand thir fortnights four,
Gar beef an' whisky fa'.
There's nae luck, &c.

XIII.

Row up the jack, the 'tatoes peel,
Get the foul things awa',
Stir! or I'll brake your leg atweel,
As sure's I'm P——y S——w.
There's nae luck, &c.

THE CHOISE.

Tune,—"This is no mine ain house."

I.

THIS Curlers weather is I trow,
O weels me on the clinking o't,
Fo'k may good ale and whisky brew,
We'll hae fun at the drinking o't.
For now we'll meet upon the ice,
An' in the e'ening blythly splice,
To drink an' feast on a' that's nice,
My heart loups light wi' thinking o't.

II.

By Boreas bund in icy chain,
Fu' well we loo the linking o't,
Nor wish't to be soon loos'd again,
But rather fear the shrinking o't.

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United by his potent hand,
In gleesom friendly social band,
We eith obey his high command,
Nor ever think o' slinking o't.

III.

Some glowring poring o'er a book,
Grow blind an' blame the inking o't
Some cloch'ring at the chimney nook,
Are half kill'd wi' the kinking o't.
But Curlers wha loo caller air,
An' cauld count neither here nor there,
Wi' ae consent to ice repair,
And only fear the pinking o't.

IV.

Some spend the winter in a trance,
Keep bed nor grudge the stinking o't,
In self-defence some take a dance,
Pleas'd wi' the bab an' binking o't.
But Curlers wi' mair manly heart,
Their skill an' strength on ice exert,
Which health an' vigour does impart,
An' well rewards the dinking o't.

V.

The lover doats on Menie's eye,
His life lies in the blinking o't,
For if it's languid he mawn die,
He canno' bear the winking o't.
But curlers wi unfettered souls,
That ane anothers cares controuls,
On ice conveen like winter fowls,
An' please them wi' the rinking o't.

VI.

The sportsman may poor mawkin trace,
Thro' snaw tir'd wi' the sinking o't,
Or if his gray-hound gi' her chase,
He's charmed wi' the jinking o't.
But Curlers chase upon the rink,
An' learn dead stanes wi' art to jink,
When tir'd wi' that gae in an' drink,
An' please them wi' the skinking o't.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND PHRASES.

Angled guard, a stone which only obliquely covers one or more stones.

Baugh ice, damp or bad ice.

Bias, an inclination in the ice.

Block the ice, see *fill the port*.

Boardhead, the space around the tee and broughs, where the stones *rest*.

Bonspel, bonspiel, bonspeel, (French *bon*, good, and Belgic *spel*, a play,—a good game: or Suio-Gothic, *bonne*, a husbandman: or Belg. *bonne*, a village, or district; because one district challenges another to play at this sport,) a match at curling between two opposite parties.

Break an egg on, to touch one stone very gently with another.

Broom kowe, (*kowe*, supposed to be derived from the same word as *colly*,) a bunch of broom originally used instead of a brush or besom.

Brough, (Alemanic, *bruchus*, a camp, often circular), a circle drawn round the *tee*.

Bunker, (Islandic, *bunga*, a swelling,) a hillock or prominence on the ice.

Channel stane, a curling stone.

To chuckle, to make a succession of *inwicks* up a *port* to a certain object.

Circle, see *brough*.

Cockee, the *tee*.

To cuittle, see *honing*.

Col, colly, coal-score, (probably from Suio-Gothic, *kulla*,) same

as *hogscore*. The Scotch word *coll* means to cut any thing obliquely, and the line is often made waving.

Crampit, cramp-bit (Teutonic, *krampe*, to contract) a flat piece of iron, with four sharp pikes below, bound to the sole of the shoe with a strap and buckle, to keep the curler from slipping.

> And for a crampit to his stumps
> He wove a pair of hob-nailed pumps.
>
> MESTON'S POEMS.

Creep, the stones are said to *creep* or *sleep*, when they are thrown with little force.

Curling, (Germain, *kurzweillen*, to play for amusement; or Teutonic, *krullen, krollen, sinuare*, to bend,—as the great art of the game is to make the stones *bend* towards the mark, when they cannot be directed in a straight line. The French, *crouler*, is, to move fast, and *croulant*, shaking, sliding stones along the ice towards a mark.

Dead guard, a stone which completely covers any object.

Delivering, the act of throwing the stone.

Director, the person who informs his party where and how to play.

Draw a shot, to play a stone gently, direct to any particular spot.

Draw up a port, see *enter a port*.

Driver, see *bin'-han.'*

Edge in, to rub one stone with another closely or gently.

Enter a port, to make a stone pass through an opening formed by two or more stones.

Fill the port, to place a stone so as to prevent a shot being taken through a port by the opposite party.

Fill the ice, nearly the same as *fill the port*.

Fled the ice, when a stone has taken a direction off the rink.

Fore-han', the person who plays first in order in his party.

Gie't heels, to sweep the stone.

Guard, to lay a stone in a direct line before another.

Grannie's wing, to get under cover, i.e. to angle off a stone, so as to hide yourself behind another.

Hack, or *hatch*, (Icelandic, *hiacka*, or Suio Gothic, *hacka*, a chop or crack,) a longitudinal hollow cut in the ice a short distance from the *tee*, to prevent the foot from slipping as the stone is delivered.

Head, (probably a corruption of heat,) that portion of the game in which both parties play all their stones once.

Hin'han', the person who plays last in order of his party.

Hogscore, the distance-line in the game. The stones which do not pass this line are distanced, as it were, and thrown aside as useless—may allude to the laziness of a hog.

Honing, is to rub the sole of a stone with a hone, to give it a fine polish.

Ice stone, curling stone.

Inring, an inwick; see *wicking*.

Inside twist, to cause a stone to revolve on its sole to the right.

Inwick, see *wicking*.

To kittle, to sweep a stone keenly.

Kuting, *kuyten*, (probably Teutonic, *kluyten*, *kalluyten*, to play with round icy masses,—to contend with quoits on an icy plain,) in Ayrshire pronounced *coiting* or *quoiting*,—signifies curling. The Dutch word *coete* means a quoit.

Lead, see *forehand*.

Lie in the bosom of, to make a stone gently touch and lie before another.

Outside Twist, to cause a stone to revolve on its sole to the left.

Outwick, to touch the outside of one stone with another, so as to carry the former towards the *tee*.

Pat lid, a curling stone lying on the *tee*.

Port, an opening formed by stones lying opposite each other.

Pouther, strength applied to the stone in delivering it.

Quoiting, *coiting*, see *kuting*.

Rack, see *rink*.

Red the ice, (Islandic, *rada*, *ordinaire*, to put in order, to break the guards with a strongly played shot, in order to lay open the *tee* or the *winner*.

Rest, to draw to any object so as not to pass it—see *lie in the bosom of*.

Ride, to throw a stone with great force towards another, to carry it out.

Rink, rynk, renk, (a course or race; probably from Saxon, *hrinc*, a strong man), the portion of ice on which the game is played.

Shot, a stone thrown towards any object; a stone which counts.

Side or *sideling shot*, a stone placed on either side of the *tee*.

Skip, (probably from Suio-Gothic, *skeppare*, a master; hence English *skipper*, a master of a vessel), a *director*.

Sole fair, to lay the stone fair on the ice in delivering.

Stug, a shot gained by accident.

Soutering, is not to allow your opponent to get a shot.

Tee toesee, (probably from Islandic, *tia*, to point out the place; or Teutonic, *tygh-en*, to point to), a small hole made in the ice, in the centre of the *broughs*; the winning point, towards which the stones are thrown.

Tee-head, see *boardhead*.

Trickers, or *triggers*, pieces of iron with sharp pikes below, and a *hold* on the top, fixed in the ice to serve instead of a *back*.

Twist, to make a stone revolve on its sole, as it slides to its destination.

Twisting, is to run out the winner, though completely guarded, by giving your stone a rotatory motion, and borrowing a little to the one side, viz., by clearing the guard and chipping the winner.

Whinstanes, Curling stones.

White ice, the ice up the middle of the Rink, whitened by the friction of the stones.

Wicking, wick, inwick, (Suio-Gothic, wick a corner, because only a corner of the stone is hit; or Teutonic *wyck*, a turning), to make a stone take an oblique direction, by striking another on the side.

Winner, the stone nearest the *tee*.

Witter, wittyr, (Suio-Gothic, *wittra, indicare*, to point out,) the *tee*.

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